



News Release from Congressman

ROB SIMMONS

SECOND DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

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SIMMONS DELIVERS DOLLARS FOR JOHNSON TRACT LAND PURCHASE



NORWICH – Rep. Rob Simmons, R-2nd District, today announced he has secured \$2 million for the purchase of the 289 acre Johnson Tract in Haddam (CT). Simmons made the announcement during a speech to the Haddam Land Trust at the Sunrise Resort in Moodus.

“Congress has recognized that this tremendously significant tract of land is worthy of federal support,” Simmons said. “It is essential that we preserve our open spaces for future generations. And it is important that we take action to preserve the land from development.”

The House Appropriations Interior Subcommittee recently approved Simmons’ request of \$2 million as part of its fiscal year 2007 annual spending bill. The acquisition of the 289-acre Johnson Tract is part of a four-state effort to include 2,550 contiguous acres to be added to the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge. The project received \$650,000 in fiscal year 2006.

Local officials and environmentalists praised the news. Haddam First Selectman Tony Bondi said, “I support any effort to make this happen and we will do what we need to do in order to help Rep. Simmons in any way we can. They’re not making land any more and the town passed the ordinance to purchase this property. It will continue to be a vital part of the community in terms of the environment and provide future generations with a wonderful place to enjoy.”

Lise Hanners, state director for The Nature Conservancy in Connecticut, added, “We are thrilled that Congress has recognized the importance of this land to the Refuge. The Salmon River and its tributaries are part of an incredibly healthy system of streams and forests in this part of the state. Adding this parcel to the Refuge is an important step in continuing to protect the incredible diversity of wildlife here.”

Simmons concluded, “The purchase of the Johnson Tract is a true public-private partnership that joins government on all levels together with land trusts and land owners to encourage voluntary conservation so that Connecticut remains green.”

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